



DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

15 CFR Part 922

[Docket No. 220908-0186]

RIN 0648-AV85

Amendments to National Marine Sanctuary Regulations; Delay of Effective Date

AGENCY: Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce (DOC).

ACTION: Interim final rule; delay of effective date.

SUMMARY: On May 13, 2022, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) published an interim final rule that appeared in the *Federal Register* and that amended the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) regulations. That rule was published with a 30-day comment period, which ended on June 13, 2022, and a 45-day delayed effective date (June 27, 2022). A subsequent notice delaying the effective date until September 26, 2022, was published on June 24, 2022. This action further delays the effective date of the interim final rule by an additional 120 days, until January 24, 2023.

DATES: As of [INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER], the effective date for the interim final rule published at 87 FR 29606, May 13, 2022, and delayed at 87 FR 37728, June 24, 2022, is further delayed until January 24, 2023.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Vicki Wedell, NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, (240) 533-0650, Vicki.Wedell@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

In response to the interim final rule published on May 13, 2022 (87 FR 29606), which updated and streamlined ONMS regulations, NOAA received eight comments before the end of the comment period on June 13, 2022. The submitted comments are posted at

regulations.gov under docket NOAA-NOS-2011-0120. Based on issues raised by some of the public comments, NOAA is preparing technical corrections and responses to those comments for the final rule. A subsequent notice delaying the effective date until September 26, 2022, was published on June 24, 2022 (87 FR 37228). In this action, NOAA is delaying the effective date of the interim final rule by an additional 120 days, to January 24, 2023. This action does not extend or reopen the comment period for NOAA's previous request for comments on the interim final rule.

National Marine Sanctuaries Act

The National Marine Sanctuaries Act (NMSA) authorizes the Secretary of Commerce to designate, manage, and protect, as a national marine sanctuary, any area of the marine environment that is of special national significance due to its conservation, recreational, ecological, historical, scientific, cultural, archeological, educational, or esthetic qualities (16 U.S.C. 1431 *et seq.*). NMSA provides the legal basis and serves as the authority under which NOAA issues this action.

Nicole R. LeBoeuf,

Assistant Administrator for Ocean Services and Coastal Zone Management,

National Ocean Service,

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

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